

# **California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley Transportation Work Group Progress Report March 2006**

## **Scope of Work (Abbreviated):**

- Coordinate activities among H99 Task Force, Caltrans, Master Plan, & Interstate negotiations
- Review and recommend H99 Business Plan to the Governor
- Oversee negotiations on content and status of H99 interstate designation
- Develop an innovative rest stop model
- Identify other transportation priorities for consideration
- Recommend statutory changes to assist in development of transportation plan

## **Vision:**

*The vision of the Transportation Work Group of the Governor's Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley is to develop innovative recommendations for the Partnership Board which, if implemented, would measurably improve the transportation system within the region, thereby improving its contribution to regional and statewide goods movement, air quality, travel, commuting, and economic prosperity.*

## **Progress to Date:**

The H99 Task Force has been invited to, and members have participated in, all Transportation Work Group meetings. Caltrans has made presentations on the Master Plan and with the Great Valley Center has offered to deliver Master Plan implementation workshops at the county level. To date one has been given in Kern County and one is being scheduled this month in San Joaquin County.

The Work Group reviewed the H99 Business Plan and recommended the Plan to the Partnership Board during the December meeting. They also recommended the Board request \$6B in funding to implement the plan.

Consensus on proceeding with Interstate designation was reached through negotiations with all eight SJV Councils of Government. There is a common understanding that support is based on the ability to gain exceptions to design standards where it does not affect safety and is seen as appropriate by Caltrans. Caltrans is currently developing a timeline for internal work to "cluster" design exceptions and will be presenting these recommendations to the Work Group at a future meeting.

The pilot projects at the Tipton and Turlock rest areas should be fully implemented within the next 60 days to include wireless internet access, wireless kiosks, and a web portal displaying regional tourism information and linking to Caltrans and State Parks information, as well as other traveler-specific sites. The design competition for the GreenStop©, that is, a sustainable, green, context-sensitive design for the CA rest stop of

the 21<sup>st</sup> century, has attracted over 160 national and international competitors. The entry period closes mid-April with the jury making their award-winning selections from the finalists on May 10<sup>th</sup> during the Great Valley Center's annual conference.

Caltrans has been asked to provide presentations for discussion at a future Work Group meeting on east/west and north/south connector corridors. And while funding to implement the High Speed Rail project seems to be on hold, the group has requested the project be presented and discussed at a future meeting.

The Great Valley Center is currently receiving previously completed documents from Caltrans that reference possible statutory and methodology changes that might affect regional transportation planning. Staff will also be soliciting ideas from a wide mailing list. Suggestions will be compiled and brought to the Work Group for consideration.

This concludes the progress report; however, the Work Group has requested the following two recommendations, developed since your last meeting, be considered by the Board for action. Thank you.

**Recommendations to the Board of the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley:**

1. It is unanimously recommended that the Board request Business, Transportation, and Housing, the Air Resources Board, and other appropriate state agencies and commissions support further study of "Short Sea Shipping" to determine if/how it might contribute to the economic, environmental, and transportation needs of the San Joaquin Valley.
2. It is unanimously recommended that the Board request the \$1B of funding for H99 currently in the Governor's proposed infrastructure bond be moved to the section inclusive of projects of statewide importance. It is also recommended the request underscore the importance of responsive, responsible oversight of allocation of bond proceeds.